

INFORMATION PAPER

SUBJECT: Approval Authorities for Military Aircraft

1. **PURPOSE.** To outline the different approval authorities for military aircraft ("Mil Air") for administrative travel as opposed to "operational mission" or "mission required" use.

2. **BOTTOM LINE:** Administrative travel on military aircraft requires USAREUR DCG approval. Operational missions and other mission-required travel using rotary wing aircraft may be approved in normal command channels.

MilAir requests do not require legal review prior to action by the approval authority. However, requests for premium class travel, spouse travel, and foreign guest travel should receive legal reviews since these areas are more susceptible to interpretation. The administrative law branch, OSJA, is always available to answer questions related to Mil Air.

3. **DISCUSSION.**

a. In late 2002/early 2003, the Office of the Army General Counsel simplified the Secretary of the Army (SecArmy) Travel Policy to allow command technical channels responsible for transportation to resolve issues of whether proposed travel by an official or other person is proper. The requirement for legal reviews was eliminated.

b. The approval authorities and restrictions set forth in the SecArmy Travel Policy apply to official travel for administrative purposes. The USAREUR CG has delegated the approval authority for travel of senior officials (e.g., general or flag officers) to the USAREUR DCG. Therefore, V Corps commanders may not approve their own administrative travel.

c. The restrictions in the SecArmy Travel Policy do not apply to "operational mission" or "mission required" use of rotary wing aircraft or to transportation to exercise command or supervision authority at adjacent or local installations. These missions may be approved in normal command channels.

d. Operational and other "required" missions include those missions necessary to accomplish the Army's and V Corps' missions and to maintain the combat readiness of aviation and ground units. These include, but are not limited to:

Actual or simulated tactical and combat operations	Transport of troops/equipment
Aircrew training	Flight tests

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Intelligence	Repositioning or reassigning aircraft
Counter-narcotics activities	Special use (Humanitarian, Disaster Relief, and Deployments)
Search and rescue	Evacuation (incl. MEDEVAC)
Transportation of prisoners	Aeronautical research and space and science applications
Use of defense attaché controlled aircraft	Exercising command/supervision authority at adjacent/local installations.
Research and development	Other such activities required to accomplish the Army's mission. (AR 95-1, Flight Regulations, para. 3-3, 1 Sep 97).
Maintenance flights	

(Table 1- Examples of operational and other required missions)

e. Examples of non-operational missions where the SecArmy Travel Policy applies include travel to give speeches; attend conferences, meetings or training courses; make routine site visits; and other similar uses.

f. When determining what is operational, both the unit's mission and need for command and control should be considered.

4. CONCLUSION: If the requested Mil Air is necessary to perform the unit's mission or to exercise command or supervisory authority in the unit's area of responsibility, the SecArmy Travel Policy does not apply. Such use is solely within the purview of the G-3 (Air) mission approval process. Eliminating unnecessary Mil Air legal reviews saves the G3 time by allowing requests to go directly to the approving authority.

POC: V Corps OSJA
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